

Town of Milton
Streets & Sidewalk Committee Meeting Minutes
Milton Library, Milton, Delaware
Wednesday, 6:30 PM, February 13, 2008

Councilwoman Betts called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Councilwoman Betts offered a moment of silence.

Roll Call

Present: George Dickerson
 Milton Police Officer Cornwell
 Bill Wright
 Emory West
 Allen Atkins
 Paul Yannucci
 Leah Betts
 Secretary ????

• H. Patricia Lodge regarding ordinance for no parking on Church Street.

Councilwoman Betts: Thanked all for coming. H. Patricia Lodge's letter regarding the ordinance for no parking on Church Street was read. It is a one-way street coming in from Chestnut Street. Cars were parking all the time on the north and south sides of the street. We suggested parking on the left-hand side coming in from Chestnut St They may still park for 10 to 15 minutes to walk over to the school. However, they were parking on both sides in the both driveways – the ambulance, the fire trucks, etc.

MAN?: It all happened because a tractor trailer tried to go down Church Street and was tied up. Part of this parking problem is the school's problem. The school should provide parking for people going into the school and employees. Adequate school parking should be provided.

Councilwoman Betts: They may park on the left-hand side to walk their children over to the school. There are signs put up for no parking on the north side of the street. The Committee is being informed for their discussion and review. C. Betts has called Ms. Lodge and she is very satisfied with parking allowed only on the south side of the street for 10 to 15 minutes. She said there are no spaces in the parking lot since the school buses park there.

Abraxus Hudson: I have the art gallery on the corner which is an in-house studio approved by the Town. I made a diagram to help anyone not familiar with the street. I measured Church Street and Sand Street which is the next street over. I wanted to point out how narrow Sand Street is in comparison to Church Street. Sand Street has no restrictions as far as direction of traffic or parking. Church Street is significantly wider than Sand Street which has room for one lane of traffic only. My viewpoint is that parking on one side of Church Street seems to make sense and the way it is now is sufficient. My fear is that 10-15 minute parking would limit the residents on the street,

my patrons, and other people needing to park more than 10-15 minutes. There should not be signs posted saying parking is limited to only 10-15 minutes.

Councilwoman Betts: There are no signs saying 10-15 minutes. She was concerned parking would not be allowed on either side and was asking for 10-15 minutes be allowed. There was confusion at the school that no parking would be allowed on either side. This discussion is to clarify the situation. Right now, there are signs to say no parking on north right-hand side of the street. The Council needs to decide on this resolution.

MAN: ? Regarding Sand Street, I want to add that a month or a month and a half ago Mrs. White had an ambulance call there. We went down with the ambulance and here came two cars the other way with a car in back of them. Everyone needed to back out so we could get to the house.

George Dickerson:???? I suggest checking out the total width of the street as a first step.

Abraxus Hudson: Sand Street is much narrower Church Street yet Church Street is full of restrictions only because of the school flow.

Councilwoman Betts: Let's have the Committee measure for true width and decide if it should be a one-way street and then present a recommendation to the Town Council at the April meeting.

• **Keri Owens regarding parking at St. John's Church.**

Councilwoman Betts: The letter from Ms. Owens was read. Ms. Owens was asked to speak on the issue.

Keri Owens: It is not just church parking but also neighbors who park on both sides of the street when they have parties. My street is more narrow than Church Street and it is impossible to get down the street with parking on both sides. There are trucks sometimes and even fire trucks and police cars. My thought is to enforce one side of the street or the other and I am open to any suggestions.

Councilwoman Betts: Chief Phillips and I have surveyed the street. Our recommendation to the Committee is to park on the north left-hand side with no parking on the south right-hand side and to have that enforced.

Keri Owens: That was the recommendation.

???? Bill Wright: ???? We have never parked on the left-hand side. I thought the no parking sign meant from Federal Street to the alleyway because there was a parking lot there for the apartment house.

Keri Owens: There was but then a fence was put up.

???? Bill Wright: ???? How did it get from no parking from the alleyway out to Chestnut Street?

Keri Owens: From my knowledge, that was always an ordinance.

???? Bill Wright: ??? They came out and put up signs from the alleyway to the property on the left-hand side. I would have thought that the Town or whoever did this would have let the church know. What happens? They put the signs up and on Sunday morning the sign says whoever is parking on the left-hand side needs to move or the police will ticket your car. It was very rude and improper.

George Dickerson: For clarification, sometimes when committees and council deal with issues, they have to deal with the actual laws on the books. This was revised and adopted by Council back on June 7, 2004. The ordinance code is online and the chapter dealing with vehicles and traffic is Chapter 18. In that particular document are no parking areas which are designated. My opinion is that this is somewhat poorly done. The north side of Prettyman Street was designated as no parking by ordinance. So we need to decide to amend the ordinance. It is common knowledge you cannot park 15 feet from another intersection and no one has to tell you not to park in another person's driveway. Common sense prevails on those issues. The recommendation was no parking on the south side of Prettyman Street. Where you choose to place signs at 15 feet from the corner to assist the fire company on that street or others with similar circumstances would not be an issue. The fire company may want to do an assessment of where they have problems turning those trucks.

Councilwoman Betts: We thought there should be signs saying from here to the corner basically on streets that are very narrow.

George Dickerson: The common sense prevailing is that you leave room from the corner. Is it enforced when violations are seen because it appears to be a violation that is not being addressed.

Officer Cornwell: A warning is generally issued the first time.

George Dickerson: As long as a warning suffices to make a behavioral change, that is the route to take. Knowing Prettyman Street is a priority, the police need to keep an eye on inappropriate parking. June 7, 2004, the ordinance already says no parking on the north side of Prettyman Street from Federal to Chestnut.

Councilwoman Betts: We are bringing it before the Committee for the police chief and the police are aware of the need for enforcement.

George Dickerson: Most town's ordinances identify every street and where parking is allowed. Milton has never done that but our Chair has now surveyed those streets all over town trying to correct the situation as a whole rather than piecemeal. Currently, enforcement authority is a problem. Ms. Betts will speak to this in a few minutes. A Street Ordinance available for everyone to use as a reference should name all the streets and indicate where parking is allowed or not allowed. The Police Department cannot enforce what is not written into the ordinance which we are attempting to fix now. State-maintained streets such as Union, Federal or Mulberry Streets are not part of the Town's ordinance.

Councilwoman Betts: We will try to resolve with a recommended ordinance covering all the streets within the next few months. We are addressing these streets now because of the letters received.

Mrs. Jones: Coming out of Behringer at Atlantic to Union in the morning or anytime, if that van is parked is parked legally 15 feet out of the intersection, I have to go into the other lane to get around it with 15 feet to straighten my car to get into the intersection to turn right or left. There is not enough space off the street to park even 15 feet from the intersection without leaving the vehicle in the roadway.

Councilwoman Betts: Please explain where you are again.

Mrs. Jones: At Atlantic Avenue on the north side, parking 15 feet from the intersection still puts a vehicle heading west out in the travel lane of the car coming onto Atlantic. That is the way I drive every morning. That vehicle is parked there legally but it is in my travel lane when it is parked 15 feet out of that intersection and it is still in my travel lane. There you are stuck in the middle of traffic.

George Dickerson: If it is that hazardous, perhaps there should be no parking from Union Street back.

Councilwoman Betts: I will add that to the information when putting together a recommendation.

Mrs. Jones: Thank you very much.

???? Officer Cornwell: I want to talk about the enforcement issue. I had worked for City of Milford Police and City of Rehoboth Police for almost 20 years. When I came here six years ago and started issuing parking tickets, people started having heart attacks. For the first two months, I issued warnings and knocking on doors for people parking the wrong way. It was actually brought up in a council meeting about people being angry about me telling them how to park because it is a state law. It has been a state law as long as I can remember. I have been driving since 16 and I am 41 now. We have guys interested in traffic and some interested in criminal. We try to mix it up and let the guys have some of everything. We can hit the parking cars, but there will be a lot of complaints. The constituents need to be told it was brought up in the meeting and we need to take care of the problem.

George Dickerson: The ordinance with all the recommendations needs to be coordinated and approved and put into Chapter 18. It will require a meeting and a public hearing as well as a second meeting and a public hearing. Once it is passed by Council and becomes a law, we could do a memo or short note and put it in the utility bills to everyone.

???? Allen Atkins or Paul Yannucci: How do you pick and choose who gets a ticket? Where I live, they have been parking on the wrong side of the road for over a year. The Police Department needs to enforce the law and not to determine whether it is right or wrong.

MAN: ???? I disagree. The officer makes a decision based on what he sees at that time. It is within his discretion whether he writes a ticket, lets the person go, or writes a warning,

Officer Cornwell: No one knows what the enforcement is because we do not post the rules on parking and traffic. There for a while we were strong on parking. Right now, there are a lot of crime problems such as people breaking into cars. I will issue a memo to take care of the parking problems.

Councilwoman Betts: I have another letter from a resident on Chestnut showing a layout for the Committee to review. We will review with the Chief. It is from Bonnie Ward who lives on 308 Chestnut Street. The letter was read and everyone was given a copy. We will discuss this with the Chief and bring to the Council for their decision.

Discussion followed with Mrs. Brown about parking on Church Street. Mrs. Brown did not understand why it was posted the way it was because Woody Johnson who uses a wheel chair is at the end of the street. The matter is being discussed at the present time.

Councilwoman Betts: Everything has been noted. There are some questions on Manship Street but everyone feels it is okay. We are still looking at it and we are not sure what we will do. Coulter Street was recommended to have no parking on one side of the street. They also wanted to check the 15 mph. After review, the 15 mph limit was passed and is in effect. The sign was placed so it can be seen from around the corner. There was also a question on Tilney Street on a No Parking sign; it has been okayed and is in the ordinance. We had a question on the corner of 16th and Mulberry. We are sending a letter to DelDOT for curbing on the right-hand side so trucks cannot park there. We had a question on Reed Street Alley. The Reed Street Extension width is to be determined. Coming down Reed Street, it is an extension across the street from Reed and it is between two houses. There is a little alley that runs back to ??? Truitt Jederson's ??? property. We had a complaint about cars parking there and making ruts in the yard. Mr. Dickerson and I are going to determine the length and the width. We will review and report the status. Atlantic Avenue needs blacktopping but that is the River Walk Project. We feel that should be a 2-inch overlay on Spruce Street and Pine Street. We are paving several streets this year. We added Bennett Street, Palmer Street and ??? Kerry Street. This is the end of the report on the streets.

Abraxus Hudson: There is a bad drainage problem at the corner of Church and Federal Streets so it is in need of repaving. It is between my property on 515 Federal Street and Betsy Brown's property.

Councilwoman Betts: We will add that to the list.

MAN: ????? For five years now, the drainage in front of Luther Towers is constantly flowing. People have to come out with a shovel every time it rains.

Discussion followed that it may be on Luther Towers property but it is flooding the street. The intersection floods all the time.

Councilwoman Betts: We will also add that to the list.

George Dickerson: As far as parking on the streets anywhere in the Town, a letter should be sent to the Milton Fire Department asking for comments or suggestions in order to implement them when working on the ordinance.

Councilwoman Betts: It is agreed to send a letter to Milton Fire for their input.

MAN: ??? Asked a question about no drainage at the Quick Stop at Rt. 16.

Councilwoman Betts: Another issue is on Mulberry Street and Magnolia Street. There is a suggestion to have a convex mirror put there because it is awful coming out of

Magnolia onto Mulberry. At one time, we had approval to make it a 3-way stop there and there were problems. We are lucky there has not been an accident there. After discussion, it was decided to contact Delmarva Power about how to handle.

Another issue was mentioned coming around the curve where the waster water treatment facility. There have been some close calls there.

Councilwoman Betts: Everything will be checked out.

• **Street Lights**

Councilwoman Betts: There are many complaints about lighting. We have had meetings with DP&L. I have a list of the lights that are out. The police are going to handle all the outages. They will check and follow up to see if fixed. Once a month they will fix the lights. There are problems at Ocean Drive, the repeat pole numbers at Oysterman Drive, Alice Street and Village Center Boulevard at Wagamon. This is because the lines have been cut. The developers and DP&L are having a problem with who will pay for them because they were cut. There are four or five left out but they were just reported February 4, 2008. Chief Phillips and his department will work on them and every week they will give me a copy for my review. There is discussion to have more street lights and stronger lighting in the Town. DP&L are surveying to see what it will cost the Town to add more lights and to fix the lights to make them stronger.

George Dickerson: Two things. One, an audit is being done by DP&L at the Town's request to identify the number of street lights we have and their costs. It is time for a relamping program which is done about every five years. Second is a survey of the intensity of the lights. There are only a couple of the new style lights and the rest are all older lights. DP&L subcontracts with Bill Mezza???? who is lighting specialist. He is working with Allen and Bob Kerr to identify additional needs and location. We will be receiving the audit.

Councilwoman Betts: We are paying the Wagamon's development light bill for safety reasons. They did not have any lights out there. It was agreed and voted on through the former administration that the Town pay to have the lights turned on even though those streets are not dedicated to the Town of Milton. There were so many complaints. This is the reason we cannot afford to put any more lights at Wagamon. There has been flack from Shipbuilders and the people in the Town about Shipbuilders. Because there was a problem we added street lights there. Some of those street lights have not been dedicated to the Town either. We are paying that and not getting any street aide from it. I want to let the public know it is not the Street Committee's fault. We cannot afford to keep adding lights when the streets are not dedicated.

George Dickerson: The problem needs to be reviewed again. Perhaps we need to go back to Council to review. Our records clearly reflect it has been discussed with Council and a letter was sent to Hal Godwin stating the Town will agree to pay for these lights.

Councilwoman Betts: There is a letter from Mr. Godwin that was read into the record at the January Council Meeting. There may need to be a legal follow-up. The next time a development comes into Town, we need to make sure they put up a bond. The lights and especially street lights should to be absorbed by the developer.

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 PM.